

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

COUNTRY	USSR (Latvian SSR)	REPORT NO.	25X1A
SUBJECT	Lepaya, Riga, and Daugavpils	DATE DISTR.	17 August 1953
		NO. OF PAGES	5
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT NO.	RD 25X1A
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	
			25X1X

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.

SOURCE:

1. The Latvians generally looked forward to a war and hoped they would be freed by Germans and Americans. They didn't believe the present regime could last much longer. Many Latvians understood German and were favorably disposed toward Germany. Latvian militiamen often allowed German refugees to escape and were more friendly to them than were the Soviet militiamen. Many Latvians wished to be repatriated with the Germans, but controls were too stringent. Estonians were much more reserved toward the Germans, did not like to speak German, and were afraid to help Germans. Source was told by Estonians that most of the best persons in Estonia had been deported, and there were not many good minds left. Latvians drank a great deal because conditions were so bad. Many Soviet soldiers told source that they felt friendly toward the Germans and hated the Soviet regime. Latvians were better dressed than Lithuanians. They were also cleaner in Latvia, especially in the country. In Latvia the men gave more money to German beggars than did the women, usually giving from 5 to 20 rubles. Soviets also gave money but much less. They were very proud, for instance, to give 50 kopeks. Many items, particularly food, were more expensive in Latvia than in Lithuania. Latvians smoked more papirosi than cigarettes.
2. Source never saw a first-class railway car in Latvia, only second and third-class. The third-class cars had three tiers. The two above were wooden and during the day were usually against the wall. There were compartments for smokers and non-smokers. Signs indicating destination were on the sides of the cars. Departure times were also listed on blackboards in small railway stations. Source never saw a train timetable for all of Latvia. A passenger's ticket would be examined upon entering the car, and only later after the train was underway would the ticket be punched. The conductors and ticket-controllers were usually women wearing black or dark-blue uniforms. Source was always able to go from one car to the other while the train was in motion; but source believed that this was not always possible, especially on local, narrow-gauge lines. On long trips, such as from Lepaya to Riga or Riga to Tallinn, seat reservations were required, even in third class.

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Lepaya

3. In Lepaya most of the ruins had been cleared away, but new buildings were rarely seen. Among the few new buildings was a three-story building near Rozu Square. There was a restaurant on the lower floor, and above was a dance hall where an orchestra played on Saturday and Sunday. A doorman and a hat-check girl were at the entrance to the restaurant, which was open only in the evening. Clients were for the most part naval officers, although there were also some Latvians and workers. There were also new apartment buildings in this area.
4. Among the old buildings still in use were the metal factory, the oil refinery, and a public building that was formerly used for dances and similar cultural activities. Both the hospital and the red-brick market were still in the same places, the former in Old Lepaya on the sea, and the latter across from the Catholic church. Hotel Roma was still standing by Rozu Square, but the inside was almost in ruins.
5. There were three movie houses in Old Lepaya. Two of these were on the street that comes from Rozu Square, probably Graudu iela, one on each side of the street. The third movie, Daile, was in the vicinity of the Catholic church. Here, tickets cost two or three rubles and the show began at 1800 hours. Usually Soviet films were shown, rarely with a Latvian text.
6. The Catholic church and the two Evangelical Lutheran churches were open and the services well attended. There was also a small Greek Orthodox church close to the railroad station on the east side of Riga's iela. In the winter of 1948-49 there was a big Christmas tree and a carousel with figures from Little Red Riding Hood near Annas Lutheran Church.
7. At this time the names of the streets were still in Latvian. Peldu iela had been changed to Sarkaarmijas iela.
8. There were few Jews in Lepaya. There were more Latvians than Soviets in Lepaya, in about the same proportion as there were more Soviets than Latvians in Riga. Militiamen were both Latvian and Soviet, but streetcar conductors were all Latvian. There were also some ethnic Germans who had their own little colony.
9. Source observed militiamen wearing two different uniforms: one dark blue with red piping on the trousers and a red band on the cap, the other uniform also dark blue but without the piping and red band. Source observed the former type of uniform at a militia house on Lielu iela between Rozu Square and Trisvienibas Church.¹ Uniforms of the latter type were seen at two militia houses, one in New Lepaya, on the right side of Riga's iela, not far from the canal bridge, and the other opposite the Catholic church and behind the market hall in the same place where the old police station was located. Source believes that the militia wearing the red band were concerned with political affairs and that the others were ordinary policemen. The MVD house was in Old Lepaya on Toma iela. Militiamen of the MVD were both Latvian and Soviet. They wore either long trousers or riding breeches and boots. On the New Lepaya side of the bridge, over the canal, there was an MVD station.
10. Source saw Norwegian and Swedish ships in the harbor, but could not get close to these ships because guards blocked the way. The ships docked on the New Lepaya side of the canal. The lighthouse was still standing, but source does not know if signals were given from it. There were many sailors on the streets.
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12. In 1948 there was in Lepaya a Baltic-German foundation consisting of a boarding-house and an orphanage. The house was on the west side of Toma iela and the street number something between 30 and 35. This foundation was run without State support by Baltic-German ladies of advanced age. The ladies spoke only German among themselves. The house had a library containing only pious books. The director was Superior Elizabeth, family name unknown, who was about 70 years old.

13. The Lepaya railroad station was an imposing building. Here was located a luxurious restaurant where music was played in the evening. In the main hall there were timetables on trains arriving and departing from Lepaya, printed in both Russian and Latvian. Source saw no books containing complete timetables. The cars that went on long trips, such as to Moscow or Leningrad, carried signs in Russian only. The third-class fare from Lepaya to Riga was 35 rubles and an extra six rubles for a seat reservation. A sleeper was 10 rubles extra. The sleeper in which source once travelled had wooden berths in two tiers (sic; see para. 2). There were a pillow, a mattress, sheets, and a blanket on each. Source was under the impression that persons slept only in the lower berths. In 1948 a train travelled from Lepaya to Riga every other day, leaving Lepaya at 0230 hours and arriving at Riga at 0900 hours. The fare from Lepaya to Saldus, which is on the Lepaya-Riga line, was 23 rubles in 1948. There was also a narrow-gauge line from Lepaya to Aizpute (N56-43, E21-35). In 1948 the one-way, third-class fare was between 12 and 18 rubles. Source heard that a train went from Lepaya through Priekule (N56-27, E21-36) to Klaipeda.

14. There were only two streetcar lines in Lepaya.² The cars were dark blue and very old. There was a sign in front of the first car giving the destination of the cars. These signs were in Latvian. Source remembered only one such sign, which was marked Stacija. Tickets cost 20 kopeks. The conductors were all Latvian, either men or women. They had no uniforms, but wore their civilian clothes without caps. The streetcars were in operation from 0600 hours to 2300 hours. The route of one line was as follows: from the railroad station by way of Rigas iela, over the canal bridge, Liela iela, Rozu Square, Tigroru iela, the market hall, Peteria iela, Siena iela, and Klaipeda iela, to the old cemetery on the left that was the end of the line. The route of the other line was: from the railroad station right at the first cross-street, probably Baseina iela, and along this street to the guarded railroad crossing. There one had to cross the tracks on foot and take another car which followed the street to the north, a right turn from Baseina iela past the oil refinery and the cemetery. This line went farther, but informant is not sure just where.

15. There were no buses within the metropolitan area of Lepaya, but there were bus lines to Ventspils and to Kuldiga (N56-58, E21-59). The buses left Lepaya from a square along Rigas iela to the right of the railroad station and not far from the canal bridge. In this square there was a small building with benches and a ticket window. The buses were old, gray in color, and without windows. In Lepaya tickets were purchased before entering the bus, but those passengers who got on at local stops bought their tickets from the female conductor. The bus to Ventspils took the road closest to the coast, through Ulmale (N56-56, E21-17). The bus was overcrowded, and people had to stand in a long line in Lepaya in order to buy tickets.

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16. There was a taxi stand near the railroad station. There were fewer horse-drawn taxis, and these had their stand in Rozu Square. The horses looked very old and tired. The drivers also were very old.

Riga

17. Source estimated that one-third of the population of Riga was Jewish. Almost every store was operated by a Jew. Source saw many Soviet officers but did not observe any enlisted men. The officers were well-dressed in clean, well-pressed uniforms. However, to source, accustomed to German officers, they did not appear quite proper, doing such things as carrying babies, and walking with their hands in their pockets. The Soviet women were also well-dressed and as elegant as the women in West Germany. In general, the Soviets were better dressed than the Latvians, and the latter appeared to have little money. There were many unemployed in Riga. Many of them usually congregated at the Central Market. Many of the unemployed dealt in the black market in such small items as pepper. The militia seemed never to bother them.

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18. [redacted] informant frequently went to the large department store, Universal Veikals, in Riga. There was still an elevator but no longer an escalator in this building. On the top floor was a hairdresser, as in former times, and a restaurant. At the entrance to this restaurant was a doorman, who told source she could not enter since the restaurant was only for better people. On Monday this store and several others in the city were closed. The grocery stores were open on Monday. Central Market had three large halls: one for meat, one for groceries, and one for dairy products. Another market was in Matisa iela, and there was a third market in Pardaugava in a red-brick, two-story building. In the latter market groceries were sold on the first floor and grain products on the second.

19. The streetcars in Riga were in operation from 0600 hours to 2400 hours. Tickets cost 20 kopeks. Streetcars were numbered from 1 through 25, but not all the lines between 15 and 25 were in operation. No. 16 passed the railroad station. Nos. 3 and 25 went from the railroad station by way of Marijas iela, Stabu iela, Avotu iela, and then the length of Pavila Church and beyond.³ No. 7 passed by the Central Market. No. 2 went to the market in Matisa iela. No. 8 went to the Pardaugava Market, formerly called Agenskalna Market.

20. As one entered the Riga Jurmala railroad station, the first staircase to the left was for trains to Yelgava, Lepaya, and Panevezys, Lithuania (N55-45, E24-25); the second staircase to the left was for trains to Riga's Jarmala (N56-59, E23-51) and Ventspils. In the Riga station the train schedules were written on a blackboard in both Russian and Latvian. One could also buy tickets at the Marijas iela ticket office, not only on the day of departure but also in advance. Tickets bought in advance cost three or four rubles more. In the summer of 1948 source traveled from Riga to Tallinn, Estonia by way of Valka (N57-46, E26-00), and Tartu, Estonia. For this trip it was necessary to have a seat reservation. There were no controls between Latvia and Estonia. The train from Panevezys to Riga left Panevezys at 0330 hours and arrived in Riga at about noon. For this trip it was necessary to change trains at Siauliai, Lithuania (N55-55, E23-20). The train from Riga to Panevezys left Riga at 2330 hours and arrived at Panevezys at 1230 hours. There were two classes, second and third, with sleepers, on this train. A third-class ticket from Panevezys to Riga cost 46 rubles, but from Riga to Panevezys the price was 35 rubles.

21. There was a place for kolkhozniki to spend the night in Tornakalns suburb, Vienibas gatve, about the third house from Bauskas iela, on the right side of the street as one faces Riga. There was a big sign which read, Lebraucama Vieta, in front of the two buildings. On the side of the street nearest Riga there was a small wooden building. Opposite this was a three-story house with a large gate through which one could bring horses. There was a large stall

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for the horses in the court of this second building. The rates for spending the night here were five rubles per person; or for a farmer with a horse, 25 rubles. The proprietor of the inn was a Latvian who spoke perfect Russian. This lebraucama vieta was very crowded, especially on Sunday, when the market in Riga had its biggest day. When it was too crowded, some transients slept on the floor. During market days the militia came here to guard against such crimes as theft. There was another lebraucama vieta in Riga close to Vidzemes Market, on the side of Matisa iela farthest from Vidzemes Market.

Daugavpils

22. There were many Jews in Daugavpils, as had been the case formerly. There were also many Russians who had been there since tsarist times, and they were anti-Communist and friendly to the Germans. Soldiers were not seen in Daugavpils, but there were many railroad workers.

23. There were many ruins in Daugavpils that had not been cleared away, although not so many as in Jelgava. There were few new buildings to be seen. A new railroad station had been built where the old one used to be, and a new office building had been built in the neighborhood of the Greek Orthodox church. There were also some new apartment buildings. The Greek Orthodox church was a fine building with a blue, onion-top cupola. There was a marketplace between this church and the railroad station. On Rigas iela near the Greek Orthodox church was a large building which housed the theater.⁴ The bus terminal was between the marketplace and this theater. The militia station was located in the former police headquarters. On the same side of this street, somewhat closer to the railroad station, was a polyclinic. The prison was located on the same street, to the right, near the railroad bridge. Two watchtowers could be seen on the prison. Over the bridge and on the same street, to the right, was a hospital. Farther along the same street, on the left, was a church; and two blocks farther down, on the right, another church. The street signs were in Latvian.

24. There were two streetcar lines in Daugavpils. One line took the following route: from the railroad station down Rigas iela, through the marketplace, past the bus terminal, turning left behind the theater, and then farther on turning left again into what was probably 18 Novembra iela, past the militia station, the polyclinic, past the prison, over the railroad bridge, and between two churches. Source was not sure just where the line went from this point. The end of the other line was the marketplace, not far from the railroad station. There was no local bus line in Daugavpils. The buses going out from Daugavpils stood in a square between the marketplace and the theater. The new railroad station was built in the winter of 1950-1951. The train from Panevezys to Daugavpils left Panevezys at 0330 hours and arrived at Daugavpils at 0800 hours. The train left Daugavpils at 2230 hours and arrived in Panevezys at 0500 hours.

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